

T Flow



738+ WORDS TOWARD
AWARENESS AND MENTAL FREEDOM

Flavia Mosci, M.S.

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Get serious about yourself, your life and who you want to become!

I flow is an innovative method that provides a foundation with building blocks to support you in removing your limitations and in channeling your inner forte!

DEDICATION

To my readers: Time to get serious about yourself, your life and who you want to become! I flow is an innovative method that provides a foundation with building blocks to support you in removing your limitations and in channeling your inner forte! My hope is that this foundation will help you as much as it has helped me throughout my journey.

To my sister, Gabi Mosci who has always inspired me to believe that anything is possible. To my parents Silvia and Ricardo Mosci who have been the best mentors and role models I could have wished for, and who taught me the meaning of unconditional love. Thank you for teaching me to believe in myself, in God and in my dreams. To my nephew Lennox, who is the biggest blessing that has come into our lives. It is amazing how a 4-year-old can teach us about gratitude, he has this wonderful way of appreciating every little nice thing that happens around him, and he expresses it in such a cute way that it always puts a smile in our face. Andrei Tudor Patrascu, thank you for all your feedback while I was completing my work, you inspired me in many ways. To my professors, supervisors, and mentors who have had a great amount of influence in my journey : Dr. Miles Matise, Dr. Abby Hall, Dr. Anita Pembleton, Stephen Notari, Kaitlyn Abadia. Thanks to Lunapic.com for cover photo editing. Thank you! I am very grateful to all of you...



CHAPTER 1

What's in a Problem?

Man is not worried by real problems so much as by his imagined anxieties about real problems.

- Epictetus

Ah ... those persistent thoughts that do not seem to go away, regardless of our attempts to rationalize with them! They manage to draw the life right out of us. We all experience problems and challenges throughout our lives—that is a part of being human. We cannot completely stop obstacles from coming our way. But at times, it seems that some of our problems can become downright stubborn, leaving us feeling completely stuck. At first sight, their intensity may seem to be merely attributable to the situation itself (the external factors), whether it be related to work, finances, school, a relationship, health, or something else. But if we were to take a closer look, we might discover that it is our own thinking about the problem that usually adds all the heavy weight. If you always find yourself in a repeating situation, with the same problem showing up over and over again, it would be wise to question your patterns of thinking that may be trapping you in that circle. Some of our negative patterns can share some very common features; they may be bursting with drama and shakeups and causing plenty of dysfunctions in our daily lives. These negative and challenging thought patterns keep running and interacting in the background, almost as if they have a mind of their own.

At times we try and fail repeatedly in our attempts to improve the situation at hand. This leaves us feeling drained and hopeless, and, at times, paralyzed. That very point at which we become overwhelmed by our unproductive, nagging thoughts is when we begin to stall. At the climax of a tug of war between our beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and behavior, the solution of the problem tends to remain obscure. When our minds pull us in one direction and our hearts and beliefs reflect something else, our feelings

tend to become unbalanced.

As a matter of fact, our own feelings could become so out of control, that we may even attempt to blame them for being the original cause of the problem. While constantly exhausting ourselves with persistent negative feelings, we then become unable to trust our own judgement and our decision-making abilities.

With so much confusion and loss of confidence, eventually we end up giving our power away completely. We lose our ability to effectively direct our own paths. We also lose hope and turn fatalistic, as if nothing we can do would ever produce a change. We withdraw from our daily lives and declare ourselves unable to properly handle even the simplest issues. This is exactly what happens when we are being held hostage by the patterns and content of our limited and negative thinking.



CHAPTER 2

Fear Tries to Interfere

At this point we may want to understand the origin of our negative rationale. The way by which we construct our version of reality takes into consideration information reported by our senses. This information gets interpreted by various internal processes, while we attempt to generate appropriate meaning. What we initially perceive gets filtered through our memory bank and is influenced by its beliefs and associated emotions. Finally, it gets categorized and stored into pre-existing “files” belonging to specific themes.

It is very important to remember that our belief system has a long history and has been shaped for all those years by a multitude of internal and external factors throughout our lives, such as our personal experiences, family, society, support system, environment, self-concept, motivation, individual role requirements, educational background, worldview, social and economic backgrounds, and religion. What happens when a new scenario is perceived through the eyes of our long-held beliefs? All these dynamics play a tremendous role in shaping the meanings that have been stored.

Now let’s talk about some of the adverse experiences that you may have had in life. Given the unpleasantness of certain emotions caused by negative past experiences, a platform of negative thoughts usually forms around them. These groups of old, stored thoughts and beliefs, along with their related emotions, will then constantly compete for our attention in the present, each time we are faced with a situation that has the smallest resemblance to the old one. Consequently, this takes away our ability to clearly evaluate the current situation.

Imagine, if you will, that annoying computer pop-up that keeps blocking the screen you would like to access. These pop-ups appear in places they don’t really belong to. I see some automatic thoughts working in such ways.

There is a problem when the content of our memory bank has been sealed with so many painful experiences, or even just one

traumatic event. The wounded mind can be a terrifying experience. Those emotionally charged memories can critically distort the lenses through which we currently filter out new information, and as this happens, those correlated negative emotions are experienced all over again. So now you may ask, what keeps us tied to our past negative beliefs and experiences? Why does our mind always go running back to them for opinion?

Fear. Fear is what takes us back. Fear is a common bond holding most past negative experiences, and it is always on high alert. It is one of the most powerful forces in life.

Fear behaves as an alarm system screaming things such as, “Watch out!” “Be careful!” “Don’t trust!” “You will fail again!” “You are not enough!” “You are not smart enough!” “You don’t deserve!” “You look terrible!” “No one loves you!” “You are weak!” “You are a loser!” “You are ugly!” “You are defected!” “You can’t do this!” This list could go on indefinitely. These, of course, are just a few of the many themes through which fear likes to hide.

What is fear? Fear is conceived to be an evolutionary step toward our survival, as it keeps us primed in the face of danger. It serves its purpose. Fear can be perceived by us as being physical or emotional. The problem appears when fear becomes irrational and distorts the accuracy of our perception. Fear can lead us to make unrelated and erratic associations while we are interpreting reality. The fear memories that we have experienced in the past tend to linger; these recollections can be strong, defiant, and resistant. In many circumstances fear can cause havoc in our lives. It can be paralyzing. Furthermore, not only does it affect our present choices, it can be quite demanding and impose its dogmas on all our future expectations. When you focus on the worst possible outcome, you actually live it. A fearful mind can take thoughts and turn them into emotional experiences. It will not necessarily differentiate whether your fear is imagined or not. But keep in mind that most of our fears have been learned. Just remember—when you have a fear, you have a choice. There are ways to escape being held hostage by them.



CHAPTER 3

Congruency through Purpose

Now is the time to get serious about living your ideals.

- Epictetus

To live a life of virtue, match up your thoughts, words, and deeds.

- Epictetus

A second element keeping our negativity and conflicts alive is the lack of an ultimate purpose in life. Congruence of feelings, beliefs, thoughts, and behavior can only genuinely be achieved when our higher purpose has been clearly defined. An ultimate goal can provide us with the essential structure, as it sets priorities that keep us from losing sight of what is important in life. Without an ultimate vision, we may lose perspective. A clearly defined sense of purpose serves as a blueprint for thoughts, emotions, and behavior, providing them with a point of reference from which we can base our life's decisions. It is particularly important because a purpose keeps all variables in harmony. A well-defined purpose allows for clear intent. What is your purpose in this life? What are your passions and dreams?

It is important now, in order to understand the next concept, to examine the various functions of a thought.



CHAPTER 4

To Think About Our Thinking

Instead of talking about what thoughts are, let us first examine what thoughts do. With thoughts we perceive, analyze, and interpret the events and situations in our lives. It is through our thoughts that we express ideas, problem solve, and basically assert our realities. Our thoughts can inspire, nurture, comfort, and heal. Unfortunately, the opposite is also true: certain thoughts can simply destroy us and take us into a dark place. What we understand about the world, we understand from the perspective of our thoughts. Our future is essentially dependent upon our current thinking. It is by means of our thoughts that we are able to express our inner selves and communicate with our inner and outer worlds.

And most importantly, our thoughts color our emotions, shape our behavior, and help us define our beliefs. They depict our past, structure our present, and outline our future. That is quite a responsibility! I think you get the picture. Our thoughts are not us; they are a part of us. With all of this in mind, let me ask you two questions: What are the current themes running through your thoughts? Who is managing them?

This brings us to the third problem, which is not realizing that we have power over our thinking. Did you ever stop for a minute to examine your thoughts? Through the process of thinking, what we are essentially doing is managing all types of internal and external data.

We tend to think that our minds run on auto-play because we fail to see the connection between input and outflow. Understandably so, as much of the processing happens outside our level of awareness—that is, it incorporates preconscious and subconscious elements. But these need not to remain outside our plane of awareness, because at any given point, we are presented with an opportunity to discover, re-evaluate and revise our programming.

We tend to think of the acts of perceiving and interpreting as being passive processes, but in truth, they are quite the opposite.

Our feelings and sensations by themselves are unable to provide a unique description of the world around us; they must be given meaning, and that is the part where you must be actively involved. In order to convey meaning to a new situation, we usually turn to our past experiences for comparison. We must understand that sometimes solving new problems in the same way as we did in the past may not work. There are no two situations that are ever exactly the same. We must be able to confront new situations with a new set of eyes. Remember, even the resources available in the now are different than the resources available back then. For this reason, we must free ourselves of our misconceptions by constantly updating our thinking program.

Don't be deceived! Thoughts should not just happen to you—pay more attention! The content and quality of your thoughts can be improved. Our thoughts need constant cleansing and renewal. Remember that thinking is only as passive as you want it to be, and for changes to happen, you must become the thinker in action. You must be able to examine and decide whether your current themes are working toward your goals, survival, and well-being. You decide the focus, and that creates the feelings and actions. Pay good attention because all this negative thinking can eventually give rise to a variety of ills: anxiety, depression, despair, hopelessness. Some thought patterns can dangerously increase our stress levels, consequently weakening our immune system and predisposing us to many illnesses. If we want to experience comfort, joy, healing, and peace, our thoughts need to reflect such themes. By systematically improving the content of your thoughts, you will notice that they will start working in your favor.

Be in charge! This is the goal. You are responsible for what you do with your thoughts.



CHAPTER 5

The Power of Our Self-Concept

I want to bring up a very important subject: Let's talk about self-love, self-worth, and self-care. Our self-concept directly influences our interpretations, as well as our expectations. If you are lacking in any one of these areas, you might already be running into a lot of issues in your life. Negative thoughts originating from these areas could possibly be keeping you locked in a circle of negative emotions and beliefs. If we are coming from a healthy and nurturing background, where our parents or our principal caregivers provided us with all of these things, naturally we grew up learning how to develop those within ourselves. As we mature from being that needy child to a healthy, developed adult, we learn the skills to comfort, nurture, and love ourselves. We grow to become our own emotional providers, caretakers, and motivators through life. Within that process we also learn to trust, respect, and value ourselves and our abilities. If initially those have been neglected, and we have not been provided with these essential models, the transition may not take place properly, and a very undeveloped self can arise. One can then become an adult who is constantly trying to get self-assurance from the outside world. If we do not learn our roles as self-providers of comfort and confidence, we will always be relying on others to gratify our fragile egos. We will constantly expect others to make us feel good about ourselves in order to feel happy and confident, and this can be plain right unproductive and exhausting.

When we create unsound expectations and impose them on other people in order to fill our emotional gaps, we usually end up in disappointment. Also, when we lack self-love and have low self-worth, we begin to misinterpret other people's actions, in a very similar manner to the one reflecting our poor beliefs. The absence of self-love leaves us very vulnerable, and it keeps us in a constant search for negative confirmations. We micro-focus and only look to see what we believe is already true; we will look for and find every instance to construct that reality that love is a lack, while we set out to illustrate how others do not love and